



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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ANITA M. BOCK
Director

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:
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April 13, 2001

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: 
Anita M. Bock
Director

DECEMBER 19, 2000 MOTION: REPORT ON THE DEPARTMENTAL REORGANIZATION

On December 19, 2000 your Board, in a motion by Supervisor Knabe, ordered that the Department of Children and Family Services (the Department) report on its progress in filling existing vacancies, hiring and promotional efforts and integration of Management positions into the new organizational structure. I requested that the due date for the response be continued until today. Following is the Department's first report in response to this Board order.

#1. That the Director of DCFS prepare a written report on the existing vacancies in DCFS, the plan for hiring and any constraints that might exist

Attached is a detailed report of Departmental hiring and vacancies, reflecting the period December 15, 2000 to April 10, 2001. During this period, the Department has hired 222 new employees. While 103 terminations during the same period significantly impacted the vacancy rate, there has been a net decrease of 151 in the Department's vacancies overall. The current Departmental vacancy rate for all classifications is only 7.9% which we consider to be representative of significant progress.

In order to accelerate the hiring process, we have developed and implemented the strategies outlined below.

To fill 182 Clerical series vacancies, we have:

- Assigned additional staff to contact potential candidates during evening and weekend hours;

- Received approval from the Department of Human Resources to conduct geographically focused clerical examinations. This will allow the Department to focus recruitment efforts on vacancies in locations historically hard to fill;
- Ensured that the Department receives newly promulgated hiring lists from the Department of Human Resources; and,
- Posted countywide vacancy transfer notices for positions for which there are no existing eligible hiring lists.

A significant constraint to full clerical staffing is that all County departments are utilizing the same hiring lists provided through the Department of Human Resources. This fosters fierce competition between departments for suitable entry level candidates.

As noted above, however, we are working with the Department of Human Resources to develop alternate strategies to meet our Department's clerical needs.

To fill Children's Social Worker budgeted vacancies, we have:

- Developed a comprehensive Children's Social Worker recruitment plan, focused on Master's Degree Social Workers and bilingual staff;
- Recruited throughout the United States, with a particular focus on the southwestern states where bilingual candidates may be readily available;
- Targeted the hiring of more than 120 social work graduates from local universities who are available for hire as Children's Social Workers upon their graduation during the upcoming months of May and June. These individuals are committed to work for a child protection agency in exchange for receiving grant funding for their education. We hope to offer employment to most, if not all, of these graduates, which will allow us to maintain lower caseloads and keep us ahead of attrition; and,
- Engaged in research projects to be completed by local universities, to study areas of retention and attrition within our Children's Social Worker ranks.

Maintaining full staffing levels in the Children's Social Worker classification continues to be a problem for the Department. While the attrition rate has recently dropped below the historic average of 20 per month, it continues to be an area of great concern. In addition to the research projects mentioned above, the Department has established a retention committee to address this issue.

To fill 43 Supervisory/Managerial positions, we have:

- Enlisted the assistance of the Department of Human Resources to administer our in-house examinations, recruitment for candidates outside of the Department, and promotional supervisory and Management level examinations; and,

- Explored the possibility of bringing in retirees with examination experience to assist in expediting the completion of examinations.

#2. That the Director of DCFS, the CAO and Department of Human Resources report on a plan for reducing the number of clerical vacancies countywide insofar as this has a direct bearing on DCFS ability to recruit clerical positions.

The Department of Human Resources formed a focus group to address the issue of clerical hiring with the specific objective of developing a plan to reduce the number of clerical vacancies Countywide. The focus group consisted of representatives from the Department of Human Resources and six line departments, including our Department.

- Several initiatives have already been implemented that have mitigated some difficulties in recruiting clerical staff. A clerical study guide was developed to assist candidates in passing the written test, and the test itself has been reorganized to maximize candidate success. These two changes have resulted in the passing rate increasing from 30% to 48%, which provides a larger candidate pool from which selections can be made. DHR has also increased the number of test administrations to three times a week, and opened an Intermediate Clerk/Light Typing examination for candidates who have a reduced level of typing ability, but who can pass the other assessments of their clerical aptitude.
- The clerical register currently has over 600 eligible candidates. However, the focus group has identified as a problem that many of the candidates fail to respond to job placement inquiries. To address this issue, there is a plan to survey the candidates to determine the reason for the low response rate. Additionally, the Department of Human Resources will consider same day referral of candidates upon their successful completion of the examination process.
- An ambitious and comprehensive campus recruitment program is being initiated. It will target over 100 high schools, adult schools and community colleges. Professional brochures and flyers are being developed that market the County as an employer of choice and that are attractive to the general public.
- Some of the other activities planned for enhancing the clerical recruitment program are greater use of the Internet, regional testing and hiring non-typing candidates (i.e., emancipated foster youth, clerks through the GAIN program, etc.).

In addition to the above, we have requested that the Department of Human Resources allow us to conduct our own focused clerical recruitment examinations so that we can fill vacancies in specific offices.

#3. That DCFS prepare a written report on how existing Management positions who have been transferred have been integrated into the newly designed organization.

Eight Managers were transferred during the past year. Two have recently retired. The remaining Managers are performing in assignments utilizing their extensive Departmental skills and experience in other key areas of the Department. Following are brief descriptions of these transfers.

- One Deputy Director is managing the Department's Policy Division
- One Deputy Director and one Regional Administrator are managing the Department's Program Development
- One Regional Administrator is developing a comprehensive facility plan for the Department
- One Regional Administrator is facilitating the placement of MacLaren Children's Center residents into the community
- One Division Chief is managing the Department's realignment by Service Planning Areas
- One Regional Administrator is managing the Department's new Research Section

These and all other managers will be subject to performance based appraisals.

#4. Review in one year by DCFS, Department of Human Resources and the CAO as to the effectiveness of the new reorganization

I will report back to your Board in one year on this matter.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we have appointed a permanent Human Resources Manager, Mr. Harvey Kawasaki. Mr. Kawasaki started in February, and has already made a substantial contribution to the improvement of our human resource functions. I would also like to mention that both the staff of the Chief Administrative Office and the Department of Human Resources have been invaluable partners in our efforts to fill our vacancies, for which we are deeply grateful.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call me or your staff may call Michelle Saulters at (213) 351-5787.

AMB:hk

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES **VACANCY REPORT**

4/13/01

<i>CLASSIFICATION</i>	<i>BUDGET</i>	<i>VACANCIES (12/00)</i>	<i>VACANCIES (4/10/01)</i>	<i>Percent of Vacancy</i>
Administrative Services Manager series	78	9	12	15.4%
Children's Services Administrator series	190	22	24	12.6%
Assistant Regional Administrator	60	5	7	11.7%
Children's Social Worker series	2730	135	125	4.6%
Supervising Children's Social Worker	443	22	20	4.5%
Community Worker	24	6	7	29.2%
Eligibility Worker	451	42	36	7.9%
Supervising Eligibility Worker	80	5	9	11.3%
Clerical/Supervising Clerical series	1233	271	182	14.8%
Word Processor I	127	48	22	17.3%
Misc. Other	562	98	57	10.1%
MacLaren Children's Center	364	(11)	0	0%
TOTAL	6332	652	501	7.9%

Reorganization *	255		228	89.4%
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*101 positions for the new bureau rolled out April 1, 2001.